

Message Text

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EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, CB

SUBJECT: CHARTCHAI VISIT TO CAMBODIA

1. SECRETARY TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER ASA SARASIN TOLD POL COUNSELOR TODAY THAT DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER CHARTCHAI' S MARCH 24 VISIT TO PHNOM PENH WAS MOST WORTHWHILE. GKR OFFICIALS WERE APPRECIATIVE OF THE VISIT, PARTICULARLY AT SUCH A DIFFICULT TIME.
2. THAI VISITORS SPENT APPROXIMATELY ONE HOUR WITH LON NOL AND ALSO HAD LENGTHY DISCUSSIONS WITH FOREIGN MINISTER LONG BORET.
3. ASA SAID THAT LON NOL, AS HE HAS DONE ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS WHEN TALKING TO RTG REPS, SPOKE OVER-OPTIMISTICALLY ABOUT DRIVING THE NORTH VIETNAMESE OUT OF CAMBODIA. ASA SAID THAT THAI TOOK LINE WITH LON NOL THAT DIRVING THE NORTH VIETNAMESE OUT WAS PROBABLY NOT FEASIBLE MILITARY GOAL AND THAT MORE PROFITABLE APPROACH MIGHT BE SOME POLITICAL ARRANGEMENT LEADING TO NORTH VIETNAMESE WITHDRAWAL. ASA SAID THE CAMBODIANS WERE ALSO INTERESTED IN THAT TRACK BUT SAID THEY MUST LOOK TO THE USG FOR HELP IF ANYTHING WAS TO BE ACHIEVED IN THAT DIRECTION. ASA NOTED THAT LONG BORET STATED IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION THAT HE DID NOT THINK THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE WOULD EVER PULL OUT ALL OF THEIR FORCES.

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PAGE 02 BANGKO 04953 281250 Z

4. ACCORDING TO ASA THE RTG VISITORS STRONGLY URGED ALL GKR FIGURES WITH WHOM THEY HAD DISCUSSIONS TO PULL TOGETHER AND FORM A UNITED FRONT AGAINST THE ENEMY.

5. ASA CONTINUED THAT ALL CAMBODIANS WITH WHOM THEY SPOKE WERE WARMLY APPRECIATIVE OF U. S. AIR SUPPORT AND U. S. MILITARY AND ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.

6. COMMENTING PERSONALLY ASA SAID THAT HE FELT THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN CAMBODIA WAS " A MESS." ASA CONTINUED THAT RTG WAS EXTREMELY WORRIED ABOUT CONTINUED STABILITY OF LON NOL GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT LON NON REMAINS IN A VERY POWERFUL POSITION AND IN FACT CONTROLS ACCESS TO LON NOL. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD FEELING THAT LON NOL DID NOT SEEM TO BE TOO WELL INFORMED ON SOME TOPICS, WHICH HE ATTRIBUTED TO LON NON' S CONTROLLING FLOW IN INFORMATION. UNGER

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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